

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
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FLOOR DEBATE

April 18, 2002      LB 642

it in the record. "Strike all provisions and insert the following: The Legislature finds and declares that because God gave Palestine to the Jews so that they could create from it a homeland known as Israel: (1) No comment, statement or criticism should be made of Israel and its policies if such comment, statement or criticism hurts the feelings of any Jew who is the personal friend of any member of the Nebraska Legislature; (2) no comment, statement or criticism should be made which is upsetting to any Jewish constituent of any member of the Nebraska Legislature; and (3) the Palestinian people have no rights that any Jewish man is bound to respect." After what happened last night, I listened and took to heart the comments of Senator Bourne, Senator Suttle, Senator Brown, and Senator Brashear, and I decided that maybe they have a point. Since the Legislature saw fit to single out Israel as the country that Nebraska should go on record as favoring over all other nations, since the Legislature decided to take sides in the fight between the Israelis, the Palestinians, and other Arab nations, I ought to flesh out the record and make it clear what thoughts were going through the minds of my colleagues when they decided not to accept my amendment to correct a problem that I see existing in the statute now. The problem that I see is a statute which singles out Israeli bonds and designates them as suitable for securities and other types of investments by banks and other named financial institutions. Every one of those institutions can do that without that singling out of Israel in the Nebraska Statutes. But a majority of my colleagues, an overwhelming majority, wanted to sustain Israel, put Nebraska on the side of Israel, and I believe the only way you can do that is to accept the notion, especially in part 3 of this amendment, subdivision 3, the Palestinian people have no rights that any Jewish man is bound to respect. The reason that turn of phrase came to me is because it's what a Roman Catholic Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court named Roger B. Taney in 1857, wrote in an opinion which he crafted, and the name of the case was...it's known as the Dred Scott decision. And he said that black people are so far inferior to white people, that black people have no rights that any white man is bound to respect. And he had other negative things to say about black people so the U.S. Supreme Court, under the directorship of a Roman Catholic Chief Justice, fastened onto black people not only